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In the claims:

Please amend the claims as shown below:

1. (Currently amended) A method of monitoring a childbirth
5 process of a pregnant woman, comprising:
in a measuring step ~~(26)~~, measuring a lactate concentration
~~(15b)~~;
in a comparison step ~~(28)~~, determining whether the measured
lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ is greater than a lactate
10 threshold interval ~~(29)~~; and
subjecting the pregnant woman to alternative child birth
options ~~(32)~~ when the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ is greater
than the lactate threshold interval ~~(29)~~.
- 15 2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1
wherein the method further comprises determining whether
labor is progressing normally in a determining step ~~(22)~~.
- 20 3. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 2
wherein the method further comprises measuring the lactate
concentration ~~(15b)~~ when labor, as determined in the
determining step ~~(22)~~, has not started or is not progressing
normally.
- 25 4. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 3
wherein the method further comprises stimulating in a
stimulating step ~~(34)~~ the pregnant woman to give birth when
the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ is less than the lactate
threshold interval ~~(29)~~.
- 30 5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 4
wherein the method further comprises determining in a
determining step ~~(36)~~ whether labor is progressing normally.

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6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 5 wherein the method further comprises measuring the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ when the labor is not progressing normally, as determined in the determining step ~~(36)~~.

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7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises determining in a determining step 40 whether labor is progressing normally when the lactate concentration ~~(15b)~~ is within the lactate threshold interval ~~(29)~~ and providing stimulation to the pregnant woman when it is determined in the determining step that the labor is not normal.

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8. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the method further comprises in a measuring step ~~(12)~~, measuring a lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ in vaginal fluids; in a comparison step ~~(14)~~, determining whether the measured lactate concentration is greater than a predetermined lactate concentration ~~(13)~~ that indicates that the membrane has ruptured and amniotic fluid has passed from an amnion of the pregnant woman.

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9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the method further comprises waiting a waiting period ~~(18)~~ when the lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ is less than the lactate concentration ~~(13)~~ and again measuring the lactate concentration in a measuring step ~~(20)~~.

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10. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 9 wherein the method further comprises waiting a waiting period ~~(16)~~ when the lactate concentration ~~(15a)~~ is greater than the lactate concentration ~~(13)~~.

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